

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5129

C O N F I D E N T I A L NICOSIA 0060

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CY, US

SUBJECT: CLERIDES REQUESTS MEETING WITH SECRETARY-DESIGNATE VANCE

1. WEHN I SAW HIM JANUARY 7 FOR A LONG REVIEW OF CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS RELATING TO THE CYPRUS PROBLEM AND GREEK CYPRIOT POLITICS, CLERIDES SAID HE WOULD BE LEAVING CYPRUS APPROXIMATELY JAN 12 ON A TOUR OF WEST GERMANY, FRANCE AND UK SEEKING SUPPORT FOR GREEK CYPRIOT COMMUNITIES FOR HIS POLITICAL PARTY, THE DEMOCRATIC RALLY. IN CONNECTION WITH THIS TRIP HE ALSO INTENDS TO GO TO WASHINGTON TO SEE SENATOR SARBANES, CONGRESSMAN BRADEMAS AND OTHER FRIENDS OF CYPRUS. CLERIDES SAID THAT WHILE IN WASHINGTON HE WOULD LIKE TO PAY A CALL ON THE SECRETARY-DESIGNATE. DEPENDING ON MR. VANCE'S WISHES, THIS COULD BE EITHER AT THE BEGINNING OF HIS TRIP (I.E., JAN 13-15) OR AT THE END (JAN 23-26).

2. I TOLD CLERIDES I WOULD CONVEY THIS REQUEST. HOWEVER, SPEAKING PERSONALLY, I SAID TIMING JUST BEFORE OR JUST AFTER INAUGURATION WAS BAD. ALSO, I THOUGHT THE NEW SECRETARY MIGHT FEEL HESITANT ABOUT RECEIVING A DECLARED OPPONENT OF MAKARIOS BEFORE FIRST ESTABLISHING SOME OFFICIAL CONTACT WITH THE CYPRUS PRESIDENT.

3. CLERIDES SAID HE UNDERSTOOD BOTH POINTS. IF THE SECRETARY-DESIGNATE WISHED, HE WOULD BE HAPPY TO HAVE THE MEETING BE
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PRIVATE AND UNPUBLICIZED. ITS PURPOSE, HE SAID, WAS TO LEARN IN A GENERAL WAY THE NEW ADMINISTRATION'S INTENDED APPROACH TO THE CYPRUS PROBLEM SO THAT HE COULD APPROPRIATELY ATTUNE HIS ACTIONS AND THE POLITICS HE MUST SHORTLY ENUNCIATE FOR HIS PARTY.

4. I TOLD CLERIDES I WOULD TRY TO HAVE AN ANSWER FOR HIM BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE JANUARY 12.

5. COMMENT: CLERIDES IS A VERY DECENT GUY WHO STAND FOR ALL THE RIGHT THINGS ON THE CYPRUS PROBLEM. IN OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES I THINK IT WOULD BE HIGHLY DESIRABLE FOR HIM TO BE SEEN BY THE US SECRETARY OF STATE, THE MORE SO IN THIS CASE SINCE THERE IS A PERSONAL ACQUAINTANCESHIP DATING FROM THE 1967 CYPRUS CRISIS. HOWEVER, (A) MAKARIOS IS A JEALOUS AND SUSPICIOUS MAN AND (B) THE CYPRUS PUBLIC IS PRONE TO IMPART VASTLY EXAGGERATED SIGNIFICANCE TO SYMBOLS. IN OTHER WORDS, GIVING AN APPOINTMENT TO CLERIDES JUST NOW MIGHT BE READ HERE AS SUPPORT FOR CLERIDES AND HIS POLITICS AGAINST THE PERSON AND POLICIES OF MAKARIOS. IF THIS IS NOT A CONCERN, CLERIDES IS ALWAYS WORTH HEARING AND TODAY, AS ALWAYS, A VOICE OF REASON IN AN ATMOSPHERE IN WHICH REASON IS SCARCE.

6. AN ALTERNATIVE PERHAPS WORTH CONSIDERING IN VIEW OF CLERIDES CONTINUING IMPORTANCE ON THE CYPRIOT SCENE WOULD BE A REPLY THAT SECRETARY-DESIGNATE WOULD WELCOME A TELEPHONE CALL WHEN CLERIDES IS IN WASHINGTON.
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